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ABSTRACT

A study investigating the relationship between select personality traits of physical education administrators and the faculty perception of the administrative role queried 41 department chairpersons and 282 faculty members through the use of a 28-item role perception questionnaire. Personality traits considered were activity, vigor, impulsiveness, dominance, stability, sociability, and qualities of reflection. The test instrument followed the summative model of the 1-5 Likert scale, spanning the range from "definitely should" to "definitely should not" for each trait. The research revealed that although congruity of role perception leads to improved faculty/administrator relationships, the more administrators feel they assume the authoritarian stance, the less successful they are in the opinion of their faculty. A cheerful and even-tempered administrator personality was viewed as the most successful by the faculty polled. (LH)

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADMINISTRATORS' PERSONALITY AND HOW THEY AND THE FACULTY PERCEIVED THE ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE AND DEGREE OF SUCCESS

BY

Dewayne J. Johnson

Roles, how they are viewed by different individuals, and how successfully these roles are carried out, have not been researched extensively in the field of education and specifically not in the area of physical education.[5,6] Leadership behavior has been looked at by numerous researchers, but behavior one might expect from an administrator is quite different from the job role one may expect the administrator to fulfill.

Previous research has indicated that when faculty and administrator disagree on what the administrator's role is, they will also disagree on how successful the administrator has been at carrying out that role.[6] The view or perception of what the administrator's role might be, as held by a specific faculty member, will be that faculty member's criterion for determining how successful the administrator is in fulfilling that role. Therefore, congruity of role perception between faculty and administrator is an important contributor to positive interpersonal relations, a healthy work environment, and faculty job satisfaction.[1,2,4,6]

However, an administrator's ability to maintain a congruity of opinion with faculty, promote positive interpersonal relations, or be flexible enough to yield to faculty opinion at the appropriate time, requires specific personality characteristics. Researchers have looked at administrator's behavioral and personality traits in an attempt to identify the relationship between these traits and work environments conducive to job satisfaction. Certain personality traits contribute to positive interpersonal relations to a greater degree than do other traits; such as

democratic vs. authoritarian, friendliness vs. aloofness, flexibility vs. rigidity. The effects of such personality traits on how successful the faculty perceives the administrator has not been determined. It remains to be determined whether the friendly, socializing administrator will be rated more successful than the cold aloof administrator, regardless of actual performance.

The literature has addressed the influence of the administrator on the work environment. The literature has also indicated that a variety of components make up or determine how desirable the working environment is for any single worker. One of these identified components is role perception of the administrator by the faculty. It would appear logical to fragment the investigation of the effect of the administrator on the total working environment to the point where it is possible to determine the administrator's influence on each individual component. Therefore, the purpose of this investigation was to study the relationship between selected personality traits of administrators and how they and their faculty perceived the administrator's role. The study also looked at the relationship between the administrator's personality and how successful that administrator was perceived to be by the faculty members.

METHODS

Subjects for this study were 41 department chairpersons and 282 faculty members of physical education departments at colleges and universities in the United States. Volunteers were solicited from physical education departments listed in the September 1974 JOHPER as having a graduate program.[3] From the list of volunteers, fifty departments were randomly selected with 41 of those providing all requested information.

All subjects, each chairperson and faculty member of the 41 departments, were asked to complete a role perception instrument that provided three sub-scores and a total role perception score. The instrument contained 28 items and followed the summative model with a 1-5 Likert scale, running from definitely should to definitely should not. Scoring procedures followed those generally recommended for the summative model. Each chairperson and faculty member also completed an instrument designed to measure perception of the administrator's success in specific administrative roles. This instrument was also constructed and scored following the summative model with a 1-5 Likert scale running from very well satisfied to very dissatisfied. Additionally, the chairpersons also completed the Thurstone Temperament Schedule that provided scores from seven personality traits. The seven traits measured by the Thurstone were: (1) Active, (2) Vigorous, (3) Impulsive, (4) Dominant, (5) Stable, (6) Sociable, and (7) Reflective.

Correlation coefficients were calculated between all total scores and sub-scores for faculty and chairpersons. In order to determine if a significant difference existed between faculty and administrators on any score, t tests were calculated for each item score on the role perception and perceived success instruments. The Hotellings T^2 was used for the analysis of the vectors within sub-scores.

RESULTS

Results of this study indicated that there was not a significant relationship between role perception of faculty and administrator. Table 1 provides the correlation coefficients for the comparisons of all scores for the administrators and faculty members. The coefficient for total role

perception scores for faculty and administrator was not significant. The administrator's total role perception score was significantly related to each of the administrators' three sub-scores: (1) promotion of interpersonal relationships, (2) organizing, planning, and coordinating group work, and (3) staff personnel matters. The correlation coefficients for the administrators' total role perception score and the two personality traits of Active and Dominant were significant at the .06 level.

The faculty's total role perception score was also significantly related to the three faculty sub-scores. Additionally, a significant negative correlation was found between the faculty's total role perception score and the faculty's perceived success score. This means that the more the faculty felt that the administrator should not perform a role, the more successful they viewed the administrator.

If the scores for the sub-categories are considered, Table 1 indicates no relationships between faculty and administrators' score for the category concerned with the promotion of interpersonal relations. The administrators' score was related to their total role perception score and two personality traits, Stable and Reflective. The faculty's score for this sub-set of roles was significantly related to the faculty's total role perception score. The comparison of scores for the sub-category concerning organizing, planning, and coordinating group work provided several significant correlation coefficients. The administrator's score was significantly related to the faculty's score for this sub-group, the administrators' total role perception score, and the personality trait Active. In addition to the significant relationship with the administrators' score, the faculty's score for this sub-category was also related to the faculty's total role perception score and the faculty's perceived success score.

Faculty and administrators' scores for staff personnel matters were not significantly related. Both scores were significantly related to their respective total role perception scores.

When scores for perceived success of the administrator were correlated, non significant coefficients are obtained for the administrator and faculty scores. However, each of these scores is significantly related to the respective role perception score. This supports the literature that suggests role perception is the basic criterion used to determine the success of the administrator. Both scores were also significantly related to the personality traits of Dominant and Stable; the administrators' score was also significantly related to the personality trait of Reflective.

When comparison of group scores were made, significant differences were found between several pairs of means, as shown in Table 2. Only the scores for the sub-category of promoting interpersonal relations failed to produce significant differences, and need not be analyzed in greater detail. This is supported by the item analysis, as there were no item scores within that category for which the means were significantly different.

The results of the comparisons of administrators and faculty's perception of the administrator's success are presented in Table 2. There is a significant difference between total scores as well as scores for seven individual items. These results are in agreement with those who hypothesize that the lack of congruity in role perception will lead to disagreement in the degree of success.

The two personality traits that produced significant correlation coefficients, Dominant and Stable, may provide a partial explanation for the difference in perceived success scores. There was a negative correlation

between the Dominant trait and administrators' perceived success score while there was a positive correlation between the Dominant trait and the faculty's perceived success score. Dominant is the characteristic measured by the Thurstone that specifically relates to administrative ability. A high Dominant score indicates individuals that view themselves as leaders, capable of taking the initiative and responsibility, and possessing other positive administrative characteristics. They are not domineering. The results of this study indicate that administrators who score high on this trait feel they are more successful at their job than do administrators who score lower on this trait. Faculty view those who score lower on this trait as more successful than those who score higher. Perhaps those who feel they are not highly successful work harder at being democratic, which is always viewed favorably by faculty.

Both administrators and faculty view the individuals who score high on the personality trait Stable as being more successful than those who score lower. People who score high on this trait usually are cheerful and have an even disposition.

Two additional personality traits have significant identification with the role perception and perceived success scores of the administrators. These traits are Active and Reflective. However, faculty's role perception scores were not related to administrative personality traits. It is likely that such role perceptions are formed through educational and professional experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of this investigation, it may be concluded that: (1) Congruity of role perception between administrator and faculty will

lead to improved faculty perception of the administrator's success at carrying out specific roles; (2) The more administrators feel that they are leaders, capable of assuming authority, the less successful they will be in the opinion of their faculty; and (3) The administrator who is cheerful and who possesses an even disposition will be viewed as more successful by their faculty than administrators who do not possess such characteristics.

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TABLE 1

RELATIONSHIPS FOR ADMINISTRATORS' PERSONALITY AND HOW THEY AND THEIR FACULTY PERCEIVED THE ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE AND DEGREE OF SUCCESS

FACTORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Fac-Sub-Score 1	1.00															
2. Fac-Sub-Score 2	.48[b]	1.00														
3. Fac-Sub-Score 3	.20	.40[b]	1.00													
4. Fac-Total Score	.64[a]	.76[a]	.81[a]	1.00												
5. Fac-Perc Suc	-.19	-.39[b]	-.21	-.36[b]	1.00											
6. Adm-Sub-Score 1	.04	.17	-.07	.07	-.05	1.00										
7. Adm-Sub-Score 2	.08	.30	.17	.21	.12	.22	1.00									
8. Adm-Sub-Score 3	-.08	-.08	.06	-.05	.18	.21	.11	1.00								
9. Adm-Total Score	-.01	.13	.08	.08	.15	.61[a]	.55[a]	.81[a]	1.00							
10. Adm-Perc Suc	.03	.08	.06	.06	.34	-.11	.08	-.03	-.03	1.00						
11. Active	-.19	.10	.21	.08	-.07	.14	.43[b]	.03	.25	-.15	1.00					
12. Vigorous	.04	.02	.06	.02	-.14	.03	-.01	-.17	-.11	-.05	-.07	1.00				
13. Impulsive	-.10	.07	.09	.05	.13	.12	.11	-.08	.04	-.17	.42[b]	.07	1.00			
14. Dominant	-.09	-.12	-.03	-.09	.26	.16	.16	.19	.25	-.32	.37[b]	-.07	.58[a]	1.00		
15. Stable	.16	.02	-.08	.01	-.33	.26	.10	.10	.20	-.60[a]	.16	.04	.14	.28	1.00	
16. Sociable	.22	-.02	.02	.11	.15	.01	-.10	.07	.01	-.08	.03	.02	.47[b]	.50[b]	.09	1.00
17. Reflective	-.16	-.13	-.03	-.10	.17	-.26	-.13	.23	-.30	.39[b]	-.19	-.12	-.21	-.23	-.45[b]	-.20

[a]Significant at the .001 level.
[b]Significant at the .01 level.

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF ADMINISTRATOR AND FACULTY
PERCEPTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE

SCORE	MEANS	F	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
TOTAL ROLE PERCEPTION			
ADMINISTRATORS	55.66	1.62	.066
FACULTY	57.35		
SUB-SCORE: PROMOTION OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS			
ADMINISTRATORS	16.05	0.59	.76
FACULTY	16.57		
SUB-SCORE: ORGANIZING, PLANNING AND COORDINATING GROUP WORK			
ADMINISTRATORS	14.51	2.25	.039
FACULTY	14.59		
SUB-SCORE: STAFF PERSONNAL MATTERS			
ADMINISTRATORS	25.10	1.82	.05
FACULTY	26.38		